Throughout the plane trip, Mrs. Kennedy sat in the vicinity of the coffin talking to Mr. O'Donnell and various close members of the party. During the course of the flight, determination of the immediate action on arrival in Washington was made to assure complete compliance with Mrs. Kennedy's wishes. I spoke to her while kneeling on the floor so I would be at the level of her face rather than leaning forward, and expressed complete desire of all of us and especially of myself to comply with her wishes, stating that it was necessary that the President be taken to a hospital prior to going to the White House. She questioned why and I stated it must be determined, if possible, the type of bullet used and compare this with future material found. I stated frankly that I had no preference, that it could be any hospital, but that I did feel that, if possible, it should be a military hospital for security measures. The question was answered by her stating that she wanted the President taken to Bethesda Naval Hospital. Arrangements were made on the ground for departure to Walter Reed Army Hospital or Bethesda Naval Hospital, as the case may be.

Mrs. Kennedy decided that she would accompany the body to Bethesda Naval Hospital and ride in the ambulance. I assured Mrs. Kennedy at this point that I would remain with the President until he was returned to the White House. The

body was carried by the Secret Service and assisted by the members of the Air Force "1" crew. The body was removed from the plane by an elevated truck at the level of the exit from the plane. Mrs. Kennedy, the Attorney General, members of the Secret Service and I were on the platform which was lowered to the ground level. The casket was removed by the same group and placed in the waiting ambulance. I was the last to alight from the platform.

Mrs. Kennedy, the Attorney General and Clint Hill rode with the body in the rear compartment of the ambulance. The driver, Paul Landis and I rode in the driver's compartment to the hospital. Mrs. Kennedy upon arrival at the hospital went to the 17th floor with the members of the party. The body was taken to the mortuary where I met it and observed its transfer to the table. The examination was performed by Commander Humes and members of his staff. Also present were Admiral Kenny, Admiral Galloway, and Captain Canada. General McHugh had remained in the vicinity of the President constantly throughout this time.

I made numerous trips to the 17th floor for re-assurance to those in that area and to supply them with some idea of the contemplated departure time. On one of these occasions, Mrs. Kennedy spoke to me in the bedroom

of the suite expressing her appreciation which was greatly valued by me and which I will long remember. The body of the President was fully clothed in a blue suit, white shirt, tie, socks and shoes. His hair was combed in the usual fashion and his appearance in the casket gave no evidence of the injury he had received. During the examination we received a call from the 17th floor in regard to Mrs. Kennedy's wedding ring which was in place on the ring finger in the appropriate position. This ring I removed personally and carried to her on the 17th floor and gave it to her in person. The original casket which

The following day we had a request for the St. Christopher medal which the President always carried in his wallet. The wallet and the rest of the clothes had been taken into custody of the Secret Service and was obtained by Mr. O'Leary and the St. Christopher medal given to Mrs. Kennedy. It was stated that she wished to have this placed in the casket with the President's body.

/s/ George G. Burkley
Physician to the President